

the inner center so as to prevent the oily substance of the inner center from bleeding,

(b) a thread rubber layer formed on the solid center, and

(c) a cover covering the thread rubber layer, wherein

the inner center has a diameter of 24 to 33 mm, a JIS-A hardness of not more than 50 and a deformation amount of not less than 2.0 mm when applying from an initial load of 1 kg to a final load of 5 kg,

the center outer layer has a Shore D hardness of not more than 60 and is formed from a resin composition mainly containing thermoplastic resin, and

the solid center has a diameter of 25 to 34 mm.

REMARKS

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the application by this Amendment.

Claims 1-4 are pending in the above-identified application.

The rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Yabuki et al. is respectfully traversed. The cited Yabuki et al. reference was recognized by the present Applicant in the specification at page 4 when the specification described the disclosure of the Japanese Patent Kokai Publication No. 173504/1997. The Yabuki et al. reference employs thermoplastic resin (ionomer resin), and oil resistant rubber as an oil resistant coating layer (column 3, lines 29-47 of Yabuki et al.).

Although thermoplastic resin is suggested in Yabuki et al., only one example that is ionomer resin is disclosed and no other resin is listed in the Yabuki et al. reference. In the present specification, specific substances for the center outer layer are claimed now, namely polyurethane thermoplastic elastomer, polyester thermoplastic elastomer, polyamide thermoplastic elastomer or a mixture thereof. Thus, it is respectfully urged that Yabuki et al. does not disclose the specific elastomeric material which is the outer layer of the center. Support for the limitation of the outer layer of the center is found at the specification, page 14, lines 2-4.

If an ionomer resin or oil resistant rubber is employed as the center outer layer, the resulting golf ball shows poor rebound characteristics and shot feel, as disclosed on page 4, first paragraph of the present specification. This is supported by Comparative Example 2 for NBR (acrylonitrile butadiene rubber) and Comparative Example 3 for ionomer resin in the present specification. Thus, the advantages shown by the golf ball according to the present invention are not expected and therefore unobvious and claim 1 as now amended is patentable over the cited art by the Examiner.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, favorable action and allowance of the present application is respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner wish to contact Applicants'

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representative, she may do so by telephoning Edward H. Valance, Reg. No. 19,896, at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington Metropolitan area.

Pursuant to the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), the Applicants hereby petition for an extension of two (2) months to March 11, 2001 in which to file a reply to the Office Action. The required fee of \$390.00 is enclosed herewith.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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JAK/EHV/bsh

Attachment: Version with Markings to Show Changes Made

VERSION WITH MARKING TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 has been amended as follows:

Claim 1. (Amended) A thread wound golf ball comprising

(a) a solid center composed of an inner center formed from a vulcanized molded rubber composition containing an oily substance, and a center outer layer formed from an oil-resistant substance selected from the group consisting of polyurethane thermoplastic elastomer, polyester thermoplastic elastomer, polyamide thermoplastic elastomer and a mixture thereof and coated around the inner center so as to prevent the oily substance of the inner center from bleeding,

(b) a thread rubber layer formed on the solid center, and

(c) a cover covering the thread rubber layer, wherein the inner center has a diameter of 24 to 33 mm, a JIS-A hardness of not more than 50 and a deformation amount of not less than 2.0 mm when applying from an initial load ^{of} 1 kg to a final load of 5 kg,

the center outer layer has a Shore D hardness of not more than 60 and is formed from a resin composition mainly containing thermoplastic resin, and

the solid center has a diameter of 25 to 34 mm.